The year in review

Projects and prototypes for sharing information

Key points

Working closely with JIN constituents and the Board, the JIN Technical Advisory Group has recommended an open, standards-based approach to integrated justice projects.

Collaborative projects have demonstrated clearly that important exchanges can be automated in a matter of weeks, not months, and that the costs are far lower than estimated previously.

The technology and design principles cover technology standards, integration, shared infrastructure, security and privacy. The Program Office will develop, maintain and share these principles with the JIN community.

JIN is first and foremost a service provider. Every time the Justice Information Network supports the automation of an exchange of justice information, at least two parties in the justice community benefit. Certainly, the number of potential beneficiaries is much higher and includes state and local agencies. The results are replicable: online services that make county data available statewide can be duplicated easily in other IT environments that house justice information.

The Program Office has overseen two projects in 2004, both of which benefit multiple constituents and demonstrate the support of various state and local entities. The results of these projects have helped the Board develop an outline for the content and character of JIN and define what role a centralized Program Office should play. In bringing together disparate members of the justice community to collaborate on integrated justice projects that benefit many agencies, the Board has evolved new thinking and a new approach to the importance and value of the JIN.

Enterprise architecture for the justice community

The JIN Technical Advisory Group (TAG), a broad coalition of state and local technology managers within the JIN enterprise, is focused on the architecture – standards, guidelines, decision-making mechanisms, business/security requirements and operating principles – that will support the build-out of integrated justice projects throughout Washington.

Working closely with JIN constituents and the Board, the JIN TAG has recommended an open, standards-based approach to integrated justice projects. This tactic minimizes risk and allows the JIN greater flexibility to adapt as technologies and circumstances change. Aligned with this recommendation are keystone technology and design principles, developed by the JIN TAG group, that will frame and guide the deployment of the 2005-07 biennium deliverables. These principles cover technology standards, integration, shared infrastructure, security and privacy, applications and data exchanges and the use and re-use of application components. The Program Office will develop, maintain and share these principles with the JIN community.

Summary Offender Profile (SOP)

The SOP, developed by the AOC, is a web-based query application that aggregates data from WSP, the courts and the departments of Corrections and Licensing and presents it to the user on one screen, thus eliminating the need to search multiple databases. The

Program Office assumed operational responsibility for the SOP in early 2004.

The application is hosted at DIS, with customer, application and technical support provided by vendors on contract with the Program Office. More data sources and query capabilities will be added to the application as funding permits and use demands.

In June 2004, the Program Office piloted the SOP in Thurston and Douglas counties. The SOP pilot helped to validate the practicality and functionality of the application, as well as the viability of the support environment. After additional testing and improvements to user documentation, another pilot deployment will be conducted. Statewide deployment will follow.

Information sharing prototypes

To help develop this Plan, the Program Office issued a Request for Information (RFI) in October 2003. This course of action was particularly appealing because all activity – responses, presentations, educational sessions and the development and deployment of two real-time applications exchanging justice information among selected agencies – was accomplished at no cost to the state.

Eight vendors responded to the RFI, proposing a variety of solutions. After careful evaluation, four vendors were invited to make presentations and two were invited to conduct proof-of-concepts to demonstrate the viability of their solution. This process, managed by the JIN Technical Advisory Group, led to application prototypes that helped to educate the justice community about the utility and viability of two potential solutions to the state's integration problems.

Equarius/Microsoft

The first proof-of-concept project was a collaborative effort to share and update stolen vehicle information among users of the King County Regional Automation Network (RAIN), the Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) and WSP. On schedule and six weeks after the project was approved, the prototype went live April 21, 2004. This landmark initiative demonstrated clearly that important exchanges can be automated in a matter of weeks, not months, and that the costs are far lower than estimated previously. The prototype accomplished its objectives: help educate the JIN community and provide an opportunity to assess the viability of a specific architectural model (Microsoft Biz Talk, software hosted centrally at DIS). Appendix E provides more information about the project.

Online Business Systems/Sonic

The second proof-of-concept examined the viability of deploying an enterprise service bus (decentralized architecture) by establishing connectivity and exchanging XML messages between DOL and AOC. This prototype took approximately six weeks to complete, and proved that exchanges of justice information could be accomplished without a centrally located infrastructure between agencies. Appendix F is a summary of this project.